



# COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES PROBATION DEPARTMENT

9150 EAST IMPERIAL HIGHWAY – DOWNEY, CALIFORNIA 90242  
(562) 940-2501



**JERRY E. POWERS**  
Chief Probation Officer

May 15, 2012

TO: Each Supervisor  
FROM: Jerry E. Powers  
Chief Probation Officer

Board of Supervisors  
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MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS  
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SUBJECT: **COUNSELING RESEARCH AND ASSOCIATES (MASADA GROUP HOMES)  
CONTRACT COMPLIANCE MONITORING REVIEW**

We have completed a review of Masada Group Homes, Inc., operated by Counseling Research and Associates, a Contractor with the County of Los Angeles.

Masada Group Homes consist of two (2) six-bed facilities, which provide services to boys from the Los Angeles County Probation Department and Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). The agency provides care for boys, ages 13-17 years, who exhibit behavioral, social and emotional and psychological difficulties. At the time of this monitoring review in January, 2012, the Ralston House was providing services for five (5) Los Angeles County Probation children and no DCFS children. The Newell House was providing services for five (5) Los Angeles County Probation children and no DCFS children.

Both Masada Group Home sites are located in Los Angeles County. The Newell Group Home is located in the Second District. The Ralston Group Home is located in the Fourth District.

## **SCOPE OF REVIEW**

The purpose of our review is to determine whether the Agency is providing the services as outlined in their Program Statement. In addition, the review covers basic child safety and licensing issues and includes an evaluation of the Agency's Program Statement, internal policies and procedures, child case records, a facility inspection and interviews with children placed in the Group Home at the time of the review. Interviews with children are designed to obtain their perspectives on the program services provided by the Agency and to ensure adherence to the Foster Youth Bill of Rights. To date, a current Auditor Controller Fiscal Review has not been conducted.

## **SUMMARY**

Based on child interviews, our review of five (5) Probation children's files, the contents of the Needs and Service Plans, and/or documentation provided by the Agency, Masada Group Home

is providing the services as outlined in their Program Statement. The Group Home is operating at an overall level of substantial compliance. However, there are several deficiencies described in the "Program Contract Compliance Monitoring Review" portion of this report that require a corrective action plan. There are also numerous deficiencies regarding the Group Home's physical facilities which require immediate attention, such as, removing the concrete slab, with protruding wires, in the backyard of the Ralston Home. Also, the Ralston Home has a missing dresser handle and graffiti on the desk in Bedroom #2; graffiti on sliding door to backyard entrance; and replace the backyard door screen. In the Newell House, paint needed near front door entrance; secure loose television coaxial cable; broken dresser drawer and sagging bed in bedroom #2; broken and cracked corner on countertop in Bathroom #1; and missing towel rod in Bathroom #2.

### **NOTABLE FINDINGS**

- Remove concrete slab with protruding wires at the Ralston Home.
- Replace missing dresser handle at the Ralston Home.
- Remove graffiti on desks at the Ralston Home.
- Remove graffiti on sliding door at the Ralston Home.
- Replace backyard door screen at the Ralston Home.
- Repaint near front door entrance at the Newell House.
- Secure loose television coaxial cable at the Newell House.
- Replace broken dresser drawer at the Newell House.
- Replace bed mattress at the Newell House.
- Repair cracked countertop at the Newell House.
- Replace missing towel rod at the Newell House.

### **EXIT CONFERENCE**

#### **In attendance:**

Bernard Smith, Administrator

#### **Highlights:**

The exit conference was conducted on January 27, 2012. The deficiencies were addressed at the time of the exit conference. The representative present was in agreement with the findings of the review. Administrator Smith understood the importance of compliance with the Master Agreement Contract for Group Home Foster Care Services and California State Community Care Licensing, Title 22 Regulations. Administrator Smith agreed to make all the necessary

corrections, repairs and replacements in the areas of non-compliance. A written Corrective Action Plan was submitted on February 24, 2012, and has been approved. A follow-up visit was conducted on April 24, 2012, to ensure that all deficiencies have been corrected. The results of the follow up visit, which can be found in detail on the final page of the "Compliance Monitoring Review" section, are as follows: interior and exterior repairs and/or replacements completed, children were enrolled in independent living programs, given opportunities to attend religious services and provide input into activities, Life Books provided and personnel files updated.

If you need additional information or have any questions or concerns, please contact Director, Lisa Campbell-Motton, Placement Permanency and Quality Assurance at (323) 240-2435.

JEP:REB:LCM:ed

Attachments (3)

- c: William T Fujioka, Chief Executive Officer
- Sachi A. Hamai, Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
- Brence Culp, Chief Deputy Chief Executive Officer
- Wendy Watanabe, Auditor-Controller
- Philip L. Browning, Director, Department of Children and Family Services
- Public Information Office
- Audit Committee
- Sybil Brand Commission
- Bernard Smith, Administrator, Masada Group Homes
- Jean Chen, Regional Manager, Community Care Licensing
- Lenora Scott, Regional Manager, Community Care Licensing
- Georgia Mattered, Public Safety, Chief Executive Officer
- Chief Deputies
- Justice Deputies

**MASADA GROUP HOMES PROGRAM CONTRACT COMPLIANCE  
MONITORING REVIEW - SUMMARY**

	<b>Contract Compliance Monitoring Review</b>	<b>Findings: January 2012</b>
I	<b><u>Licensure/Contract Requirements</u></b> (9 Elements) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Timely Notification for Child's Relocation</li> <li>2. Transportation</li> <li>3. SIRs</li> <li>4. Compliance with Licensed Capacity</li> <li>5. Disaster Drills Conducted/Logs Maintained</li> <li>6. Runaway Procedures</li> <li>7. Allowance Logs</li> <li>8. CCL citations for safety/plant deficiencies</li> <li>9. Detailed sign in/out log for children</li> </ol>	Full Compliance (All)
II	<b><u>Facility and Environment</u></b> (6 Elements) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Exterior Well Maintained</li> <li>2. Common Quarters Maintained</li> <li>3. Children's Bedrooms/Interior Maintained</li> <li>4. Sufficient Recreational Equipment</li> <li>5. Sufficient Educational Resources</li> <li>6. Adequate Perishable and Non Perishable Food</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Needs Improvement</li> <li>2. Needs Improvement</li> <li>3. Needs Improvement</li> <li>4. Full Compliance</li> <li>5. Full Compliance</li> <li>6. Full Compliance.</li> </ol>
III	<b><u>Maintenance of Required Documentation and Service Delivery</u></b> (13 Elements) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Child Population Consistent with Program Statement</li> <li>2. Probation Caseworker Authorization to Implement NSPs</li> <li>3. Children's Participation in the Development of NSPs</li> <li>4. NSPs Implemented and Discussed with Staff/Parents</li> <li>5. Sampled children progressing towards meeting the NSP case goals</li> <li>6. Treatment team developed timely <b>initial</b> NSP with the child</li> <li>7. Treatment team develop comprehensive <b>initial</b> NSP with the child</li> <li>8. Therapeutic Services Received (individual, group, substance abuse, etc.)</li> <li>9. Recommendation Assessments/Evaluations Implemented (psychological, psychiatric, medical evaluations/assessments)</li> <li>10. Probation Caseworkers Monthly Contact Verified</li> <li>11. Agency assist the child in maintaining important relationships</li> <li>12. Treatment team develop timely <b>updated</b> NSP with the child</li> </ol>	Full Compliance (All)

	13. Treatment team develop comprehensive <b>updated</b> NSP with the child	
IV	<b><u>Education and Workforce Readiness</u></b> (8 Elements) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Child enrolled in school within three (3) days after placement or efforts documented</li> <li>2. Child attends school as required</li> <li>3. Agency facilitates in meeting the child's educational goals (IEP conference, tutoring, parent/teacher conference, homework, etc.)</li> <li>4. Based on services provided, has the child's academic performance and/or attendance increased (improved grades, test scores, promotion to the next level, High School graduated, IEP goals?)</li> <li>5. Current IEPs maintained</li> <li>6. Current copies of the child's report cards or progress cards maintained</li> <li>7. Group Home provides children with opportunities to participate in age appropriate Youth Development Services (YDS) and vocational training programs</li> <li>8. Group Home encourages children's participation in YDS or equivalent programs.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Full Compliance</li> <li>2. Full Compliance</li> <li>3. Full Compliance</li> <li>4. Full Compliance</li> <li>5. Full Compliance</li> <li>6. Full Compliance</li> <li>7. Needs Improvement</li> <li>8. Needs Improvement</li> </ol>
V	<b><u>Health and Medical Needs</u></b> (6 Elements) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Initial medical examinations conducted</li> <li>2. Initial medical examinations timely</li> <li>3. Required follow-up medical examinations conducted timely</li> <li>4. Initial dental examinations conducted</li> <li>5. Initial dental examinations timely</li> <li>6. Required follow-up dental examinations conducted timely</li> </ol>	Full Compliance (All)
VI	<b><u>Psychotropic Medications</u></b> (2 Elements) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Current Court Authorization for Administration of Psychotropic Medication or document effort to obtain</li> <li>2. Current Psychiatric Evaluation/Review for each child on psychotropic medication</li> </ol>	Full Compliance (All)
VII	<b><u>Personal Rights and Social/Emotional Well-Being</u></b> (17 Elements) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Children informed of Group Home's policies and procedures</li> <li>2. Children feel safe at Group Home</li> <li>3. Children supervised by staff</li> <li>4. Group Home provides appropriate staffing and</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Full Compliance</li> <li>2. Full Compliance</li> <li>3. Full Compliance</li> <li>4 Full Compliance</li> </ol>

	supervision 5. Children report satisfaction with meals and snacks 6. Staff treats children with respect and dignity 7. Appropriate rewards and discipline system in place 8. Consequences fair 9. Children allowed private visits, make and receive telephone calls and to send and receive unopened correspondence/mail 10. Children free to attend religious services and activities of their choice 11. Children's chores easy or hard (reasonable) 12. Children informed about their medication 13. Children aware of their right to refuse medication 14. Children free to received or reject voluntary medical, dental and psychiatric care 15. Children given opportunities to participate in planning activities 16. Children participate in activities, including at the Group Home, in the community or school 17. Children given opportunities to participate age-appropriate extra-curricular, enrichment and social activities in which they have an interest	5. Full Compliance 6. Full Compliance 7. Full Compliance 8. Full Compliance 9. Full Compliance  10. Needs Improvement  11. Full Compliance 12. Full Compliance 13. Full Compliance 14. Full Compliance  15. Needs Improvement  16. Needs Improvement  17. Needs Improvement
VIII	<b><u>Personal Needs/Survival and Economic Well-Being</u></b> (8 Elements)  1. \$50.00 Clothing Allowance 2. Adequate Quantity Clothing Inventory 3. Adequate Quality Clothing Inventory 4. Involvement in Selection of Clothing 5. Provision of Personal Care Items 6. Minimum Monetary Allowances 7. Management of Allowance 8. Encouragement and Assistance with Life Book	1. Full Compliance 2. Full Compliance 3. Full Compliance 4. Full Compliance 5. Full Compliance 6. Full Compliance 7. Full Compliance 8. Needs Improvement
IX	<b><u>Discharge Plan</u></b> (3 Elements)  1. Children placed at least 30 days, was the child discharged according to the permanency plan 2. Children placed at least 30 days, did the child make progress toward meeting their NSP goals 3. Group Home using available resources to attempt to stabilize the placement prior to requesting the removal of the child	Full Compliance (All)
X	<b><u>Personnel Records</u></b> (14 Elements)  1. DOJ submitted timely 2. If applicable, FBI submitted timely 3. Child Abuse Clearance Index (CACI) submitted timely 4. Appropriate employees sign a criminal background	1. Full Compliance 2. Full Compliance 3. Full Compliance 4. Needs Improvement

	<p>statement timely manner</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Group Home staff who have direct contact with children meet the educational/experience requirements</li> <li>6. Employees received timely health screenings</li> <li>7. Required employees have a valid CA drivers license</li> <li>8. Appropriate Group Home employees signed copies of the Group Home policies and procedures</li> <li>9. Appropriate employees received the required initial training</li> <li>10. Appropriate employees received minimum one-hour training in the area of child abuse identification and reporting</li> <li>11. Appropriate employees received CPR training</li> <li>12. Appropriate employees received First-Aid training</li> <li>13. Appropriate employees received the required annual on-going training</li> <li>14. Appropriate employees received emergency intervention training per the Group Home's program statement</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Needs Improvement</li> <li>6. Needs Improvement</li> <li>7. Full Compliance</li> <li>8. Full Compliance</li> <li>9. Full Compliance</li> <li>10. Needs Improvement</li> <li>11. Full Compliance</li> <li>12. Full Compliance</li> <li>13. Full Compliance</li> <li>14. Needs Improvement</li> </ol>
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**MASADA GROUP HOMES PROGRAM CONTRACT  
COMPLIANCE MONITORING REVIEW**

**Ralston House**  
**2312 Ralston Lane**  
**Redondo Beach, CA 90278**  
**Phone: (310) 374-9523**  
**License Number: 191601785**  
**Rate Classification Level: 12**

**Newell House**  
**4740 W. 152<sup>nd</sup> Street**  
**Lawndale, CA 90260**  
**Phone: (310) 978-9237**  
**License Number: 198201957**  
**Rate Classification Level: 12**

**LICENSURE/CONTRACT REQUIREMENTS**

Based on our review of five (5) Probation child files, as there were no DCFS placed children at the time of this review, and/or documentation provided by the Agency, Masada Group Homes was in compliance with all nine (9) elements in the area of "Licensure/Contract Requirements": The Group Home notifies all required agencies in a timely manner when a child is relocated. The Group Home takes all necessary steps to stabilize a child to prevent removal and provides the children with all their transportation needs to doctor or dental appointments, drug or alcohol treatment, any weekend activities. The Group Home completes, documents, and reports all Special Incident Reports (SIRs) in a timely manner to the Officer of the Day (OD) Line, I-track incident reporting system, the child's Deputy Probation Officer (DPO) of Record, and any other necessary parties. The Group Home follows runaway procedures accordingly. The Group Home complies with the licensing capacity. The Group Home conducts disaster drills once a month and maintains a disaster drill log. A review of the disaster drill log revealed that drills have been completed on a monthly basis, and the last disaster drill was completed on December 16, 2011, at both sites. The Group Home maintains an allowance log that was reviewed and shows the children are receiving the appropriate amount of allowance on a weekly basis. The allowance log also shows that all allowances are provided and spent with the most recent date of all 5 children receiving their allowance on January 6, 2012. The sign in and out log for children was properly maintained and utilized. The log showed that the children were being released only to approved parents or guardians.

There have been no Community Care Licensing (CCL) safety/plant deficiency citations within the past five (5) years.

**Recommendations:**

None

**FACILITY AND ENVIRONMENT**

Based on our walk through inspection of Masada Group Homes, Ralston and Newell sites and interviews conducted with five (5) Probation placed children, Masada Group Homes were out of compliance with three (3) of the six (6) elements in the area of "Facility and Environment". The elements of non-compliance are "Exterior Well Maintained"; "Common Quarters Maintained"; and "Children's Bedrooms/Interior Maintained".

Masada Group Home sites are located in residential communities. The front exterior of the Ralston Home is well maintained and properly landscaped, with trimmed bushes, mowed lawns, and clean paint. However, the surrounding exterior areas of the Newell and Ralston Homes, which include the sides of the homes and backyards, are in need of replacement, repair or graffiti removal.

The Ralston Home has 3 bedrooms and the Newell Home has 3 bedrooms. Most of the mattresses are comfortable; however, one mattress needs to be replaced in bedroom #2 of the Newell Home. All beds have a full complement of linens, and the sleeping arrangements are appropriate. Each child had their room decorated to their liking with sports or music posters, special rugs and comforters.

All Masada Group Homes have age-appropriate and accessible recreation equipment, such as board games, a television, a computer, a DVD player, and gaming consoles. Some board games are "Scrabble", "Connect 4", "Sequence", "Jenga", "Skip Bo", Chess, Checkers, Backgammon, and Dominoes. Multiple books and resource materials are available, such as World Book encyclopedias and many novels, fiction and non-fiction.

All Masada Group Homes maintain a supply of perishable and non-perishable items, such as sliced bread, eggs, milk, green peppers, lettuce, tortillas, hamburger patties, hamburger buns, lime punch, fruit punch, sausage, ground beef, and orange concentrate. The Group Homes each have an extra refrigerator or freezer in order to have an abundance of food for the residents. There is fruit readily available in the kitchen for the residents to have fresh fruit any time they please. The fresh fruit present during this visit were apples, pears, peaches, oranges, and bananas. None of the children expressed concern that they were not being fed and were very satisfied with the food.

The deficiencies noted are as follows:

Ralston Home, Exterior:

- Concrete slab with protruding wires needs to be removed

Newell Home, Exterior:

- Paint near front door entrance

Ralston Home, Recreation Room

- Remove graffiti on the sliding door
- Repair or replace rip in backdoor screen

Newell Home, Recreation Room

- Fix loose television coaxial cable

Ralston Home, Bathroom #1

- Repair crack near light switch

Newell Home, Bathroom #1

- Repair broken corner on countertop

Ralston Home, Bedroom #2

- Repair or replace missing dresser handle
- Remove graffiti on desk

Newell Home, Bedroom #2

- Repair broken dresser drawer
- Replace sagging bed mattress

Newell Home, Bathroom #2

- Replace missing towel rod

**Recommendations:**

1. Masada Group Homes shall ensure that the aforementioned deficiencies cited will be corrected and repaired in a timely fashion in order to ensure the safety and security of all residents placed at the Group Home.
2. For the exterior of the Ralston Home, the concrete slab with protruding wires needs to be secured or removed. Paint is needed for the entrance of the Newell Home.
3. For the interiors of the Group Home sites, the group home needs to replace one (1) mattress; repair all damaged drawers; secure loose television coaxial cable; repair backdoor screen; remove all graffiti from both homes; repair all cracks in the walls and countertops of bathrooms; replace a missing a towel rod;

**MAINTENANCE OF REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION AND SERVICE DELIVERY**

Based on our review of five (5) Probation child files and/or documentation provided by the Agency and child interviews conducted, Masada Group Homes was in compliance with all 13 elements in the area of "Maintenance of Required Documentation and Service Delivery": The Group Home's Program Statement is consistent with the population present in the Group Home. The Probation casework was authorized to implement the Needs and Services Plans and all children participated in the development of their Needs and Services Plan. The Needs and Services Plan that was implemented was discussed with staff and parents in a timely fashion and was very comprehensive and child specific. All children interviewed acknowledged progressing towards meeting their Needs and Services Plan case goals. All children acknowledged receiving therapeutic services, such as individual counseling with their therapist and/or occupational therapy. Of the five (5) Needs and Services Plans reviewed during this monitoring visit, all Needs and Services Plans were very thorough and in depth. Each Needs and Services Plan was in accordance to each child's specific needs. No two Needs and Services Plan were alike, and the therapists attempted to make each Needs and Services Plan unique to each child's needs. The therapist made realistic goals for the child in the amount of time the child was placed at the Group Home. All children seemed to be progressing towards the goals set in their Needs and Services Plan. For example, one child was attending school everyday and his grades improved. All children verified that their assigned Probation Officer contacted them every month and that they were able to contact their Probation Officer when needed. Masada Group Homes assists the children

in maintaining important relationships with parents or caregivers by allowing telephone calls and in person visits.

**Recommendations:**

None

**EDUCATIONAL AND WORKFORCE READINESS**

Based on our review of five (5) Probation child files and/or documentation provided by the Agency and child interviews conducted, Masada Group Homes was in compliance with six (6) of the eight (8) elements in the area of "Educational and Workforce Readiness". The two (2) elements of non-compliance are "Group Home provides children with opportunities to participate in age appropriate Youth Development Services (YDS) and vocational training programs and "Group Home encourages children's participation in YDS or equivalent programs". Child interviews revealed that the Group Home is neither providing these opportunities nor encouraging participation in them due to the children stating that they have never heard of these types of programs while being in the Group Home. The Group Home explained that it did not encourage these programs because the YDS programs will only allow children to participate when the semester begins, not while a semester is in session when some of the children are placed at the Group Home. The Group Home only provided one (1) child with an opportunity to participate in age appropriate Independent Living Program (ILP) or any vocational training program. The one (1) child participated in a welding class. The Group Home only encouraged one child to participate in ILP, while the other children were not aware of ILP.

The children are attending school within three (3) days after placement and are attending school as required. The Group Home facilitates in meeting the children's educational goals, by providing tutors or after school help by Group Home staff. The Group Home has shown that the children's attendance and academic performance has increased since being placed at the Group Home due to children stating that they now go to school on a regular basis, which in turn gives them the opportunity to learn and earn credits. One child stated that he is thankful for the opportunity to go to school away from his neighborhood because he can go to school "in peace." He also added that he will become involved in the Drama Club at his high school. All current IEPs, progress reports, and report cards are maintained in the child's file.

**Recommendations:**

1. Masada Group Homes shall provide and encourage all age appropriate children with the opportunity to participate in Youth Development Services, including ILP or equivalent and vocational training programs. Masada Group Homes will enroll all eligible children in ILP or equivalent and vocational training programs at the beginning of the next semester.

**HEALTH AND MEDICAL NEEDS**

Based on our review of five (5) Probation child files and/or documentation provided by the Agency and child interviews conducted, Masada Group Homes fully complied with all six (6) elements in the area of "Health and Medical Needs". The Group Home had all initial medical examinations conducted in a timely fashion. All required follow-up medical

examinations were conducted in a timely fashion. The Group Home had all initial dental examinations conducted in a timely fashion. All required follow-up dental examinations were conducted in a timely fashion. One child interviewed stated that he finally got his cavities filled and that if he was home, he would have never seen the dentist.

**Recommendations:**

None

**PSYCHOTROPIC MEDICATION**

Based on our review of five (5) Probation child files and/or documentation provided by the Agency and child interviews conducted, Masada Group Homes fully complied with both elements in the area of "Psychotropic Medication".

According to the Agency's management, there are several children taking psychotropic medications; however, of the five (5) children interviewed, only one had a current psychiatric evaluation. The agency provided documentation of the current court-approved authorization for the administration of psychotropic medication for the child taking these medications. Documentation based on the psychotropic medication review tool confirms that the children are routinely seen by the prescribing psychiatrist. This information is appropriately documented. The one child interviewed stated that he feels that the medication is helping him stay calm and live a productive life.

**Recommendations:**

None

**PERSONAL RIGHTS AND SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING**

Based on our review of five (5) Probation child files and/or documentation provided by the Agency and child interviews conducted, Masada Group Homes was in compliance with 13 of the 17 elements in the area of "Personal Rights and Social/Emotional Well-Being". The four (4) elements of non-compliance are "Children Free to Attend Religious Services and Activities of their Choice"; "Children Given Opportunities to Participate in Planning Activities"; "Children Participate in Activities, including at the Group Home, In the Community or School"; "Children Given Opportunities to Participate in Age-Appropriate Extra-Curricular, Enrichment and Social Activities in which they have an Interest".

The children reported that they are informed about the Group Home's policies and procedures upon arrival in the Group Home. Children report that they feel safe in the Group Home and are provided with appropriate staff supervision. Children report satisfaction with meals and snacks; for example, they enjoy meals prepared at the Group Home like, chicken, spaghetti, roast beef, and mashed potatoes. Children also reported that they always have snacks available to them; like, apples, bananas, kiwi, strawberries, oranges, granola bars, almonds, and chips. There is a weekly menu always posted in the kitchen. Children express satisfaction with the quality of their interactions with staff and report that, overall, the facility staff treat them with dignity and respect. Children report that they are assigned chores that are reasonable and not too demanding, such as vacuuming the living room, washing dishes, mopping, and

sweeping the game room. Children report appropriate rewards and a fair, consistent discipline system is in place at the Group Home, such as, receiving Special Incident Reports (SIRs), or doing extra chores. Children are allowed to make and receive personal telephone calls and send and receive unopened mail. Several children reported that they have not been asked about attending the religious service of their choice, but also reported that they have never asked to go to a religious service and stated that they do not care about attending any religious services.

Children report that the discipline policies are consistently enforced, and there are fair and appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior. Children reported that they will receive a SIR or receive extra chores and a report to their Probation Officer for inappropriate behavior.

Children also stated that they can receive or reject voluntary medical, dental and psychiatric care. Children stated that they are all informed about psychotropic medication and their right to refuse them.

Children report that they are not given the opportunity to participate in planning activities conducted at the Group Home. Several children report that they are not given the opportunity to participate in age-appropriate extra-curricular, enrichment and social activities in which they have an interest; however, one child was given the opportunity to participate in the Drama Club at his high school. Several children reported that they have never asked Group Home staff or been offered by Group Home staff to do any extra-curricular, enrichment and social activities after school such as taking a music class or art class. The children reported that the weekend activities that they do go on are enjoyable. The children reported going to the movies, the park, the "Griffith Observatory", and the museum.

#### **Recommendations:**

1. Masada Group Homes shall give the children an opportunity to participate in planning activities conducted at the Group Home as well as encouraging them to engage in the opportunity to participate in age-appropriate extra-curricular, enrichment and social activities in which they have an interest, including attending the religious service of their choice.

#### **PERSONAL NEEDS/SURVIVAL AND ECONOMIC WELL-BEING**

Based on our review of five (5) Probation child files and/or documentation provided by the Agency and child interviews conducted, Masada Group Homes was in compliance with seven (7) of the eight (8) elements in the area of "Personal Rights and Economic Well-Being". The one (1) element of non-compliance is "Encouragement and Assistance with the Life Book".

The Group Home provides appropriate clothing, items of necessity and the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance to children. Children are provided with opportunities to select their own clothes, and the clothing provided is of good quality and of sufficient quantity. The Group Home conducts shopping outings every three (3) months at appropriate clothing stores, such as "JC Penney" or the "Del Amo Fashion Center". All children reported that they are satisfied with their choice of clothes and shoes. All

clothing receipts and waiver of the clothing allowance every three (3) months were verified and placed in the child's files.

The Group Home provides children with the required minimum weekly allowance and the children spend their allowances as they choose. The children reported that they usually spend their money on snacks while out on activities or during home pass. The children reported they were given the option to save their money in a savings account, but none wanted to put it in an account.

The Group Home provides children with adequate personal care items, such as shampoo, soap, deodorant, toothbrush, toothpaste, and all bed linens. The Group Home does not encourage or assist in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books. The children reported that they have never heard of a "Life Book" through the Group Home. Several children stated that they keep their own personal photo books, not provided by the Group Home.

**Recommendations:**

1. Masada Homes shall encourage or assist in creating and maintaining photo albums or life books.

**DISCHARGE PLAN**

Based on our review of three (3) discharged child files and/or documentation provided by the Agency, Masada Group Homes complied with all three (3) elements in the area of "Discharge Plan".

All children placed at least 30 days were discharged according to their permanency plan. All three (3) children's Case Plan goal was Family Reunification, and all three (3) returned home to their parents. All children placed at least 30 days were discharged towards meeting their Needs and Services Plan goals. The Group Home is using all available resources in an attempt to stabilize the placement prior to requesting the removal of the child. The Group Home has the child speak to his therapist, Probation Officer, Group Home Administrator before requesting the removal of the child to see if another plan can be implemented in order for the child to remain in the Group Home.

**Recommendations:**

None

**PERSONNEL RECORDS**

Based on our review of documents in the employee files at Masada Homes, the Group Home was in compliance with nine (9) of the 14 elements in the area of "Personnel Records". The five (5) elements of non-compliance are "Appropriate Employees Sign a Criminal Background Statement Timely Manner"; "Group Home Staff who have Direct Contact with Children Meet the Educational/Experience Requirements"; "Employees Received Timely Health Screenings"; "Appropriate Employees Received Minimum One-Hour Training in the Area of Child Abuse Identification and Reporting"; and "Appropriate Employees Received Emergency Intervention Training per the Group Home's Program Statement".

A review of five (5) employee records was completed. All background checks for four (4) employees reviewed were completed in a timely manner. Among the five (5) employees sampled, two (2) employees did not receive timely health screenings. All employees in the sample did have copies of a valid California driver's license. Three (3) out of the five (5) employee records in the sample had current de-escalation and restraint training, while two (2) had the necessary paperwork missing from their personnel file. All staff sampled had current on-going training and training on CPR and First Aid. One employee file reviewed was missing the required educational documentation, his high school diploma. All files reviewed had the documentation for criminal and child abuse clearances for their employees prior to being hired. Among the five (5) employees sampled, two (2) employees did not receive emergency intervention training per the Group Home's Program Statement.

**Recommendations:**

1. Masada Homes shall immediately update and maintain criminal background statement, educational requirements, and all other on-going trainings. In addition, all required documents shall be readily accessible upon request.

**AUDITOR CONTROLLER FISCAL REVIEW**

As of the date of this review, there has not been a Fiscal Review completed by the Auditor Controller's Office.

**Recommendations:**

N/A

**FOLLOW-UP VISIT**

On April 25, 2012, a follow-up visit was conducted at Masada Homes' Newell House and Ralston House, to verify that all recommendations had been completed.

A complete follow-up walk through inspection of the interior was conducted, and all recommendations have been repaired or replaced. The interior deficiencies had been corrected. All graffiti on desks or dressers has been removed.

In the Ralston House, the concrete slab in the backyard has been completely removed. The crack in bathroom #1 near the light switch has been repaired. Also, the backyard sliding door has been completely replaced.

In the Newell House, the wall near the front door has been repainted. The coaxial cable has been secured to the wall. The bathroom counter in bathroom #1 has been repaired and a new mattress was bought for bedroom #2. Also, the towel rod in bathroom #2 has been replaced.

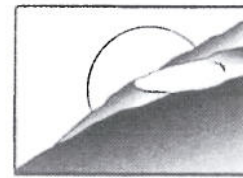
All children eligible for ILP or YDS or any vocational program have been enrolled in their respective programs.

All children interviewed are offered the opportunity to attend the religious service of their choice and allowed an input into types of activities being done in the Group Home.

All children placed at the Group Home now have "Life Books" available to them during their stay at the agency. The Occupational Therapy Coordinator has incorporated the "Life Books" into their curriculum.

All necessary paperwork missing from the Personnel files reviewed has been updated and placed in the respective employee files.

February 24, 2012



MASADA  
HOMES

... building a foundation

A Division of Counseling & Research Associates

Los Angeles County Probation Department  
Group Home Monitoring Unit  
3965 S. Vermont Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90037  
Attention: Joe NinoFranco, DPO II

**RE: Corrective Action Plan for Masada Homes**

Dear Mr. NinoFranco,

Based upon your findings, the following Corrective Action Plan has been instituted:

Regarding the findings for Item II. (Facility and Environment):

10. The recommendations mentioned were corrected by our agency maintenance staff (see attachment – 1A). In order to address the recommendations noted in Item II, on an on-going basis, the group home staff will be responsible for inspecting the home on a daily basis to ensure compliance with Title XXII. Masada Homes' Day Supervisor will continue to thoroughly inspect both group homes for compliance with Title XXII regulations and contractual obligations, on at least a weekly basis.

Regarding the findings for Item IV. (Education and Workforce Readiness):

35. & 36. Once a group home client is referred to our Occupational Therapy Department (OT), the OT staff begins approximately a three (3) – four (4) hour process of assessing the skill and aptitude of clients who range in age from 16-18 years old (the rationale behind this is the Southern California Regional Occupational Center – located in Torrance, CA accepts them at the age of 16). Various Pre-Vocational assessments are done on the client to best determine which potential trade class may best fit their preference.

Southern California Regional Occupational Center (SCROC) only allows students to enroll at the beginning of each semester (Fall Semester 9/06/11 – 1/25/12 and Spring Semester 1/30/12 – 6/07/12) (see attachment 2A). Summer sessions are no longer offered, thus limiting opportunities for our clients to acquire entrance into trade school training with enough preparation or clear comprehension of what he is being asked to comply with. So any client admitted to the Masada Homes Residential Program after the beginning of the respective semester must wait until the following semester to enroll.

During our initial orientation with each new client, the various types of programs/curriculum (OT, ILP, etc.) Masada Homes offers is presented to them by various residential staff (social worker/case manager, therapist & probation officer).

**VII. (Personal Rights and Social/Emotional Well-Being)**

The agency's policy is to allow input from the client regarding religious services and activities of their choice. After interviewing some of the residential staff, this is the first time they had heard of a client requesting to attend another church service or requesting to join a school club. Masada Homes will collaborate with the respective probation officers, family members and client to ensure their requests (within their personal rights) are being met.

**VIII. (Personal Needs/Survival and Economic Well-Being)**

During the client's orientation class of Occupational Therapy, the Department as well as the campus staff will make the development of a "Life Book". Since all clients participate in the OT Department throughout their stay in the program, they will have the opportunity to work on their "Life Books" as long as they remain in the agency. The Occupational Therapy Coordinator will monitor that all "Life Books" are included in the curriculum of all their classes. The term "Life Book" will be explained to the clients for clarity purposes due to the fact some did not know that their awards, certificates, graduation pictures and resumes are part of their "Life Book".

**X. (Personnel Records)**

**77. The one staff that did not have educational requirements in his personnel file has worked for Masada Homes as a childcare worker (Live-in House Parent) for over 22yrs. Our childcare worker qualifications are as follows:**

- 1. High School Diploma.**
- 2. One year experience in child care or college coursework in a related subject.**
- 3. Valid California Driver's License and good driving record.**

**82. All residential staff were instructed by Director of Group Homes to register/complete a child abuse identification and reporting (Mandated Reporting) class (all residential staff have complied with completing the required class and have a certificate of completion in their respective agency personnel file).**

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**Masada Homes**  
**Corrective Action Plan**

**Regarding the finding that two (2) staff did not receive emergency intervention training, one staff's Pro-Act Training certificate was in his agency personnel file and the other staff is in the process of registering for the Pro-Act Training class.**

**We hope that this Corrective Action Plan meets with your approval. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to call me at (310) 715 – 2020.**

**Sincerely,**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bernard Smith". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'B' and 'S'.

**Bernard Smith, MSW**  
**Chief Operations Officer**  
**Masada Homes**